

Madam Speaker, I join with all of my colleagues in congratulating Brenda D. Williams on her retirement and wish her continued happiness in the future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. J. GRESHAM BARRETT

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 16, 2009

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, unfortunately, I missed recorded votes on the House floor on Monday, November 2, 2009 and Tuesday, November 3, 2009.

Had I been present on Monday, November 2, 2009, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall vote No. 832 (on motion to suspend the rules and agree to H.R. 1168), "aye" on rollcall vote No. 833 (on motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 291), "aye" on rollcall vote No. 834 (on motion to suspend the rules and agree to S. 509).

Had I been present on Tuesday, November 3, 2009, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall vote No. 835 (on motion to suspend the rules and agree to H.R. 3949), "aye" on rollcall vote No. 836 (on motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 398), "aye" on rollcall vote No. 837 (on motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 866), "aye" on rollcall vote No. 838 (on motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 867), "aye" on rollcall vote No. 839 (on motion to suspend the rules and agree to H.R. 3157), "aye" on rollcall vote No. 840 (on motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 736).

ANN EVANS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 16, 2009

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and applaud Ann Evans for her outstanding service to our community.

Ann Evans exhibits a rare combination of drive, leadership, compassion and generosity. She is a nursing professional with extensive experience in both classroom and hospital settings and is committed to ensuring safe, high quality delivery of care in our community. Ann Evans has worked hard to improve patient care at Lutheran by incorporating a cultural belief model as a foundation for improving patient satisfaction. She has been recognized professionally for her efforts by the American Heart Association and is a fellow of both the American Heart Association and the American Academy of Nursing.

In her dedication to furthering women's issues, Ann introduced a program called Inspire to Jefferson County which focuses on non-traditional approaches which encourage women to practice self care and preventative care. She also introduced the Daisy award, a monthly patient-nominated award for exceptional nurses, and provided the lead gift to the Friends of Nursing Fund dedicated to the advancement of nursing excellence in the community.

In addition to her work in healthcare, Ann Evans serves as Board secretary/treasurer of

The Cloud Foundation, a group which focuses on the preservation of wild horses on public lands. She served on the Jefferson County Symphony Board of Directors, has been appointed to the Colorado Center for Nursing Excellence and the Daisy Foundation's Board of Directors, and has served on the Board and as President of the American Association of Critical Care Nurses.

I extend my deepest congratulations once again to Ann Evans for her recognition by the West Chamber of Jefferson County. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING THE PICKERING TREATY IN CANANDAIGUA, NY

HON. ERIC J.J. MASSA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 16, 2009

Mr. MASSA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the anniversary of the longest standing unbroken treaty between the United States government and a sovereign Native People. This Wednesday, the 11th of November, will mark the two hundred and fifteenth anniversary of the signing of the Pickering Treaty in Canandaigua, New York, the treaty which established peace between the people of the Iroquois Confederacy and the United States of America.

Timothy Pickering, representing President George Washington on that historic day in Canandaigua, along with the leaders of the Iroquois Nation, signed the treaty which established peace and friendship on the western frontier of New York while securing lands in New York State for the Iroquois Confederacy. The treaty was signed into law by President Washington in January of 1795, following its ratification by the United States Senate in Philadelphia.

As a veteran, I note the appropriateness of this anniversary falling on Veterans Day. It is significant that Native Americans join the U.S. Armed Forces at a higher per capita rate than members of any other group in our country and have established a record of bravery under fire that stands as a monument to courage and national service. The service of our veterans, regardless of race or ethnicity, all sacrifice for what this treaty has stood for over two hundred years: Peace between peoples, cooperation between neighbors, and friendship among nations.

I stand today to remind this storied chamber that while the bonds of friendship that embody this treaty have been strained, they have never broken. It is an imperative that we, as Americans, keep and celebrate the promises that we make to other nations and that we always recognize the importance of our word. No other treaty signifies this sacred obligation more than the Treaty of Canandaigua.

RECOGNIZING THE HARLEM COUNCIL OF ELDERLY, INC., SALUTE TO EGYPTOLOGIST DR. YOSEF A.A. BEN-JOCHANNAN

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 16, 2009

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise with great pride to join New York Democratic County Leader Keith L.T. Wright and the Harlem Council of Elders to pay tribute to Egyptologist and Pan-Africanist, Dr. Yosef A.A. Ben-Jochannan (Dr. Ben), Harlem's internationally renowned historian and educator of the African Diaspora.

In 1918, Dr. Yosef A.A. Ben-Jochannan, affectionately known as Dr. Ben was born in Gondar, Ethiopia to Krstan ben Jochannan, a lawyer and diplomat, and Tulia Matta, a native of Puerto Rico, who was a homemaker and midwife. Dr. Ben's parents were both of the Jewish faith. His father was a member of the "Falasha," or Beta Israel, and his mother was a descendent of Spanish Sephardic Jews. Krstan ben and Tulia met in Madrid, Spain, where she was attending college and he was working as a diplomatic attaché. Soon after their marriage, they traveled from Spain to Ethiopia where their son, Yosef, was born.

In Ethiopia, he spent the first five years of his life, later on moving to the Americas. He said in later interviews that, in the 1920s, the Ethiopian government sent his father to Brazil to help develop its coffee trade. They lived for about a year in Rio de Janeiro before a 1928 coup in Ethiopia saw the overthrow of Emperor Zauditu and the consolidation of power under Emperor Haile Selassie. After the change in political leadership, the family decided not to return to Ethiopia but instead settled permanently in Puerto Rico. Yosef was raised primarily in the town of Fajardo, located on the eastern side of Puerto Rico, and the nearby islands of St. Croix and St. Thomas, where his mother had relatives. He was thus fluent in Spanish and English from an early age.

Dr. Ben attended the University of Puerto Rico at Rio Piedras, where he first studied law, but later switched to civil engineering. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1939. In his senior year of college Dr. Ben wrote and self-published a booklet titled *Nosotros los Hebreos Negros* (We the Black Hebrews) about his experience growing up black and Jewish on a predominately Catholic island where at the time people of African ancestry were commonly viewed as inferior. Dr. Ben's father was fluent in several languages and often spoke with his son about the significance of Ethiopia's ancient past. However, at school and in the community, he frequently heard the view that Africa was a backward and wretched continent. In response to this, his father sent him to visit his grandparents in Ethiopia, where he stayed for several months. To get there, Dr. Ben traveled by ship to Egypt, then took a train through that country to Ethiopia, and thus began his lifelong fascination with Africa's 4,000-mile-long Nile Valley.

Upon his return to Puerto Rico, he worked briefly as a lawyer and in 1941 moved to New York City with his maternal uncle, Casper Holstein, a self-made millionaire and philanthropist who had become rich from the Harlem

"numbers racket." Holstein was one of the largest contributors to Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association, and was also politically active in his native Virgin Islands. Dr. Ben gained a unique insight into the rich cultural milieu of black New York, including its lively street life, informal "numbers" lotteries, street-corner preachers, and politics. At the time, Harlem was the epicenter of African American activism in support of Ethiopia, which had been invaded and occupied by Italy under Benito Mussolini during World War II. Although the occupation ended the year he arrived in New York, Dr. Ben joined the Ethiopian World Federation and African Nationals in America.

Ben Jochannan initially found work as a draftsman, but he was drawn to the study of Africa and its ancient history. He began to speak on Harlem street corners, mostly about African history, taking part in a tradition of public speechmaking that was one of the neighborhood's unique attributes, joining such noteworthy contemporaries as Arthur Reid, Carlos Cooks, and Wentworth Matthew. He then came to know several members of the Harlem History Club's leading intellectuals and historians such as John Henrik Clarke, J. A. Rogers, John G. Jackson, and Richard B. Moore. During the late 1940s, Dr. Ben met and befriended a young man known as "Detroit Red," who used to hustle on the corner below his Harlem office. Their friendship deepened after "Detroit Red" joined the Nation of Islam in prison, returning to Harlem as Malcolm X. They remained close up until Malcolm's assassination in 1965.

Through this early period of his life in the United States, Dr. Ben maintained the Jewish faith of his upbringing, attending Harlem's Commandment Keeper's Ethiopian Hebrew Congregation led by Rabbi Wentworth A. Matthew and other synagogues. In New York, he continued to struggle as he had in Puerto Rico, with the prevailing societal presumption that tended to question his identity as an African Jew; while at the same time, his study of ancient Egyptian history and spiritual practices was having an ever increasing impact on his thinking. He later wrote in several of his books, his differences with other Jews and his intense identification with the African American struggle eventually caused his complete break with Western man's Talmudic Judaism.

In the 1950s, Dr. Ben worked as a researcher for UNESCO and with the Zanzibar mission to the United Nations until that country merged with Tanganyika to become Tanzania in 1961. He later began teaching as an adjunct professor in New York, mostly as a lecturer on African history at such schools as Marymount College at Tarrytown and at Columbia Teacher's College. In 1957, Dr. Ben led a group of nine African American educators to Egypt to show evidence of his contention that sites such as Abu Simbel, the temple of Isis at Philae Island, and the royal tombs of the Valley of the Kings were the remains of ancient black civilizations. He began a series of these trips over the years, and by his estimation led several thousand African Americans to Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia over the next four decades. The trips not only facilitated his own study and writing, but they came to be a major part of his legacy as a teacher and contributor. In 1960, Dr. Ben self-published his first work produced in the United States, entitled, "Black Man of the Nile," which

he sold for \$5 a copy at Lewis Michaux's National Memorial African Bookstore on Lenox Avenue. In 1961, he married Gertrude England, of St. Croix. The couple would go on to have nine daughters and three sons. They also adopted six other children. Throughout his career as a writer and teacher, Dr. Ben remained a fixture of the Harlem community where he raised his family.

When Harlem was engulfed by several days of social unrest during the summer of 1964, after the police slaying of a local teenager, Dr. Ben was one of several Harlem activists who met with New York Mayor Robert Wagner and, later, John Lindsay to address systemic problems facing the black community in New York.

As a historian and anthropologist, Dr. Ben would return to the Nile Valley more than fifty times and self-publish forty-two books on African pre-history; the civilizations of Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia; and on religion. His work argued that the creators of ancient Egyptian civilization (the builders of the pyramids, the Sphinx, and cities and lodges) were Black Africans who first migrated north from the Central Rift Valley of present-day Tanzania and Uganda. He claimed that mainstream publishers refused to publish his work, saying that there was not sufficient public interest in them and that the publishers had no way to fact-check his claims. His books were known for their tendentious tone and crude presentation that included newspaper clippings, hand-drawn maps, and an informal, idiosyncratic writing style. However, these shortcomings did not reflect a disregard for academic standards such as citation, footnotes, and bibliography, which he supplied extensively. Dr. Ben chose to write in a manner that could be readily absorbed by both lay readers and researchers with little more than a middle-school education. He also steadfastly criticized the overall presentation of African history in American universities and museums. In the late 1960s, Dr. Ben worked briefly as a writer for a New York publishing company, W. H. Sadlier, where he wrote textbooks on African history such as *Southern Lands*.

In 1973, he served as an adjunct professor of History and Egyptology at Cornell University's Africana Research Center, where his longtime friend and colleague John Henrik Clarke was teaching. Dr. Ben taught there for fifteen years, a period during which he also served as a visiting lecturer at the Faculty of Languages at Al Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt. In 1979, he traveled to the South Pacific where he lectured in Papua New Guinea about the native population's origins on the African continent. In 1984, he became one of six founding members of the Association for the Study of Classical African Civilization (ASCAC), an organization of black scholars focusing on the ancient African world. The other founders were John Henrik Clarke, Asa G. Hilliard III, Jacob H. Carruthers, Leonard Jeffries, and Maulana Karenga.

Dr. Ben was a popular and sought-after lecturer on college campuses nationally and internationally, celebrated for his direct, polemical style and wit. In 1993, Mary Lefkowitz, a Wellesley classics professor, mentioned him prominently in a *Wall Street Journal* editorial that fueled an acerbic national debate about "Afrocentrism" in academia. Dr. Ben, a lifelong bibliophile had amassed a personal library of over 15,000 books chronicling African and Af-

rican American history. Outside of academia, Dr. Ben's reputation remains high particularly among many African American laypeople. Today, he can be frequently spotted around Harlem where residents greet him warmly as Dr. Ben!

AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE FOR AMERICA ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, November 7, 2009

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to cast one of the most important votes of my congressional career—a vote in support of H.R. 3962, the Affordable Health Care for America Act.

We are on the threshold of history that has been a half-century in the making.

The promise of America as a land of equality and opportunity that embraces and cares for all of its citizens is but an empty promise without the guarantee of healthcare and the freedom from financial devastation resulting from illness.

For so many of us, this long battle has had a singular, courageous champion who has fought like a lion for the sick, the elderly, the left behind and the left out. Our great achievement today will also be our greatest memorial to our friend, mentor and inspiration, Senator Edward Kennedy.

Like Senator Kennedy, many of us wondered—as the decades marched by—whether our efforts for comprehensive healthcare reform would ever be successful.

His unwavering commitment to decent healthcare for all Americans has paved the way for the bill before us today. It is on the shoulders of this giant that we stand and I pledge my vote as a tribute to the late Senator.

At the heart of this legislation is one simple, indisputable idea: Everyone deserves health insurance they can afford.

Our system is broken. In a nation where health is a daily value and where health care is the finest in the world, I hear daily from constituents who cannot afford to take care of themselves or their families, who are driven out of the system by skyrocketing premiums, who live under the threat of a shuttered business or a bankrupt household, or who simply have to roll the dice and hope they will get better—or not too much worse.

Perhaps most tragically, our current system turns its back on those most in need—those with a pre-existing condition. Health insurance is meaningless if it's only available to the healthy.

H.R. 3926 will cover 96 percent of all Americans.

It prohibits discrimination based on pre-existing conditions.

It eliminates lifetime caps—immediately.

It includes a non-profit public insurance option designed to increase competition and lower prices.

It provides affordability credits to lower-income Americans to help them pay for coverage.

It modernizes and strengthens Medicare, ensuring the program's continued solvency and eliminating the prescription "donut-hole."